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The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies
Newsletter

The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies

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The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies

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IJCS NEWS

The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies Annual Newsletter | Volume 4

2016

From the Director

The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies (IJCS) allocates the bulk of its educational resources to scholarships and grants to students matriculated in the Master of Arts in Jewish-Christian Studies (JCST) program at Seton Hall University. Our scholarship recipients compose an international body of students from diverse faith backgrounds and come from various walks of life.

In 2016 the Institute granted scholarships to students from Tanzania and Ghana for the first time. There is a pressing need among Catholic priests and Sisters living in Africa to learn how effectively to address complex religious, ethical and social issues, and we are pleased to help support the Church in addressing this demand. We are happy to announce that three priests from Nigeria whom we were supporting recently graduated and will be returning to Africa where they will apply the knowledge and skills they have gained in the JCST program to promote justice and peace in several contexts throughout their dioceses and communities.

Our local alumni are also accomplishing great things and making a difference. Read on pages 7-8 how the work of one alumna, Peppy Margolis, is positively impacting our world today.

In addition to providing scholarships, the Institute also sponsors an annual Monsignor John M. Oesterreicher Memorial Lecture. This year's keynote speaker was Rabbi Noam Marans, who discussed the 2015 Vatican document entitled "The Gifts and the Calling of God Are Irrevocable' (Rom 11:29): A Reflection on Theological Questions Pertaining to Catholic-Jewish Relations on the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Nostra Aetate (No. 4)." You can read about Rabbi Maran's lecture on page 4 and can also learn on page 6 about the importance of another significant document, "The Gift of the Priestly Vocation," that was recently published by the Holy See's Congregation for the Clergy.

Thank you to all who supported our mission in 2016. May you be blessed with abundant joy and peace throughout 2017!

Reverend Lawrence E. Frizzell, D.Phil.

Director, Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies
Director, Jewish-Christian Studies Graduate Program



Our scholarship recipients have come from 23 countries across five continents

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Photo on the cover of the Conference Schedule, which can be downloaded at www.ccjr.us/images/ICCJ-CCJR_web_schedule.pdf

Religious Pluralism in a Changing World

Annual Meeting of the International Council of Christians and Jews

by Rev. Lawrence E. Frizzell

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was the site of the 2016 meeting, hosted by Dr. Philip Cunningham and his colleagues at St. Joseph's University from July 10-13, 2016.

Reminded of William Penn's emphasis on a people's "freedom of conscience as to their religious profession and worship" (Pennsylvania Charter of Liberties, 1701), the program integrated ideals and historical realities into a portrait of life in the British colonies and the United States over the centuries. Dr. Jonathan Sarna (Brandeis University) reflected on the long and varied Jewish experience in the United States; the much shorter Muslim experience was presented by Dr. Mehnaz Afridi (Manhattan College). On the third morning, the final plenary session in this series considered "International Perspectives on Religious Pluralism," with speakers from France, Czech Republic, Chile, Austria and Israel.

On the first evening the keynote address was given by Rabbi David Saperstein, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. He reflected on interreligious relations in the world today.

The final plenary address was given by Dr. Edward P. Sanders, who reviewed the approaches to Paul of Tarsus before his studies of the New Testament in the context of the late Second Temple Jewish beliefs and practices. His work gave rise to a "new perspective on Paul."

In relation to the fiftieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on the Church's Relation to Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*), three documents were published: the long text of The Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and two Jewish statements, one by clergy and scholars of the French Jewish Community and another by an international group of Orthodox Rabbis. These were discussed briefly, along with a lengthy text by the Presbytery of Chicago on relations with the Jewish community in metropolitan Chicago. Each of these texts should be the basis for further education for those adhering to each faith community.

Each day there was a series of five workshops on a wide variety of topics. "Accepting Difference and Teaching Acceptance," a phrase coined by Dr. Amineh Hoti, Director of the Centre for Dialogue and Action at Lucy Cavendish College, University of Cambridge, provided an example of courageous work in education being done in Pakistan to overcome terrorism.

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Religious Pluralism in a Changing World- *continued*

"Higher Education in Christian-Jewish Relations" discussed the needs and challenges in the United States, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Austria and France.

"Sharia and Halakhah in the U.S. Today" sketched the challenges for Jewish and Muslim communities in the western world, including the United Kingdom and Germany.

Each morning began with a "meditative moment" commemorating three stalwart members of the ICCJ over the decades: The Rev. Armin Ihle of Uruguay, Dr. William Szekely of Australia and Dr. Victor Goldbloom of Canada.

Founded by Christian and Jewish leaders in post-World War II Europe who were determined to provide antidotes to the tragic misunderstandings and persecutions of the past, the work continues world-wide to tackle the very different challenges of the early 21st century. The ICCJ is the umbrella organization for 40 national Jewish-Christian dialogue organizations in five continents. In recent years the Abrahamic Forum has provided a context for including Muslims in the work of education, so urgently needed in the very fragile situation of the world today.

One afternoon was set aside for field trips to sites related to the themes of the conference, including the new National Museum of American Jewish History and the National Constitution Center with interactive exhibits that can be accessed anywhere. This is an impressive educational "tool"!



Access Father Lawrence Frizzell's website at <http://blogs.shu.edu/lawrencefrizzell/blog/>

Free Resources for Holocaust & Genocide Studies

The Institute's director, Father Lawrence E. Frizzell, maintains a personal website and blog that serves as a forum where students, educators, theologians and scholars can explore various areas of biblical research, scholarship and archaeology; Jewish-Christian studies and relations; ecumenical studies; Catholic liturgy, prayer and ethics; and medieval and renaissance religious art.

Father Frizzell recently added the new page, [Online Resources for Educators of Holocaust & Genocide Studies](http://blogs.shu.edu/lawrencefrizzell/blog/), to the *Research & Resources* section of his personal website and blog. This new page links to 50 websites that offer free online access to lesson plans and other classroom materials and resources that can help enhance an educator's classroom teachings about Holocaust and Genocide studies.

To be notified of this and other additions to his website, be sure and subscribe to his blog at <http://blogs.shu.edu/lawrencefrizzell/blog/>.

23rd Annual Monsignor John M. Oesterreicher Memorial Lecture

The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies has been hosting a lecture in honor of the life and legacy of our founding director since 1993. This year the 23rd Annual Monsignor John M. Oesterreicher Memorial Lecture took place on November 3, 2016 at Seton Hall University and featured keynote speaker, Rabbi Noam Marans, Director of Interreligious and Intergroup Relations for the American Jewish Committee (AJC).

Rabbi Marans offered his analysis and his perspectives regarding the Vatican document ["'The Gifts and the Calling of God Are Irrevocable' \(Rom 11:29\): A Reflection on Theological Questions Pertaining to Catholic-Jewish Relations on the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Nostra Aetate \(No. 4\),"](#) which was issued by the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews on December 10, 2015. During his presentation he discussed Msgr. Oesterreicher's pioneering role in Catholic-Jewish relations and his pivotal contribution to the development of the "Statement on the Church's Bond to the Jewish People" within *Nostra Aetate* (No. 4).

The primary focus of Rabbi Marans' presentation centered on the ways in which the "Gifts" document, "more clearly than any other previous Vatican document," affirms the Church's teaching that God's covenant with the Jewish people is irrevocable. For him this affirmation and the way the "Gifts" document explains why the Church prohibits programs that are directed at converting Jews takes Catholic-Jewish dialogue to a "new level." He concluded by stating:

It will yield hundreds of analyses and conversations...and will be studied by Catholics, Jews and others with the meticulous sanctity reserved for Talmudic texts, much the way *Nostra Aetate* has been studied and argued about for 50 years. "Gifts" is a worthy intellectual celebration of an occasion that Catholics and Jews should not take for granted. It is five decades, actually 51 years now, and *Nostra Aetate* is still a gift that keeps on giving. The new "Gifts" document has invigorated the dialogue - a dialogue that was hatched in no small part by Monsignor John Oesterreicher and his fellow travelers.

Click [here](#) to watch the podcast of Rabbi Marans' presentation for free on the Institute's iTunes channel.



The Kinship of Catholics & Jews



Tune in to WSOU 89.5 FM every Sunday morning from 8:30 am - 9:00 am for the IJCS radio program, *The Kinship of Catholics & Jews*. Moderated by Father Lawrence E. Frizzell, the show promotes the shared values of Christians and Jews and features a wide variety of special guests, including Jewish and Christian academics and specialists.

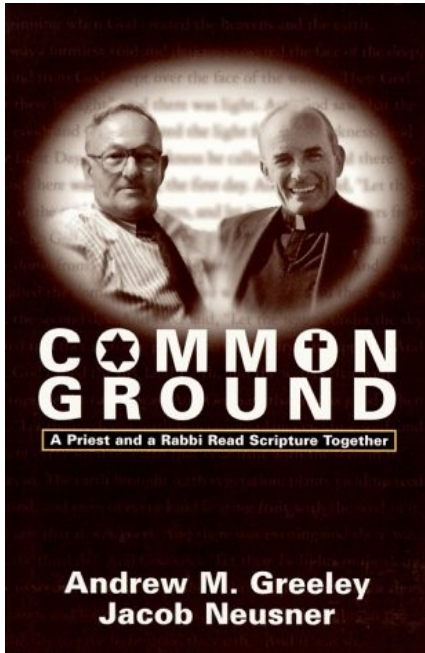
You can also listen to past shows 24/7 from any computer, iPhone, iPad or mobile device for free on *The Kinship's* iTunes channel. Click [here](#) to start listening now!

The IJCS has another iTunes channel where we publish podcasts of our most popular events, including the annual Msgr. John M. Oesterreicher Memorial Lecture. Visit our other [iTunes channel](#) today and start watching free videos from our lectures and conferences that cover a wide variety of topics such as Catholic-Jewish Relations; Pope John XXIII; Jewish Dietary Laws; and much more!

Rabbi Jacob Neusner (1932-2016)

A Reflection on Scholar of Judaism(s)

by Rev. Lawrence E. Frizzell



The passing of Rabbi Jacob Neusner from this world to the Heavenly Academy has received considerable attention in the [New York Times](#) (October 11, 2016), Jewish weeklies and on the Internet. He made a great impact on the study of the classical rabbinic sources through a number of books rivaling Isaac Asimov's total in other fields.

Rabbi Neusner stimulated the development of chairs in Jewish Studies on many secular campuses across the United States. A number of his students filled these positions and have made impressive contributions to the field.

Books by Rabbi Neusner ranged from translations and technical studies to popular surveys that have served non-Jewish college students and seminaries. He reached out to dialogue with scholars from many backgrounds; some saw light and others were intrigued by the fireworks.

I wish to draw attention to two dialogues with Catholics. In 1990 he and Father Andrew Greeley published *The Bible and US: A Priest and a Rabbi Read Scripture Together* (New York: Warner Books). Already, Greeley had written popular level surveys of the two Testaments of the Christian Bible. In this book, Neusner presented 14 chapters on the Jewish Bible; Greeley had eight. For the New Testament, Greeley had seven and Neusner had three chapters on Jesus, Paul and Mary, plus "What Judaism can Teach Christianity about Reading Scripture." The

concluding chapters ask "Can Christianity and Judaism Conduct Dialogue?" "No" from Neusner; "Yes" from Greeley. Guaranteed to be provocative and challenging!

During his time as Chief Shepherd of the Church, Pope Benedict XVI made time to write three volumes, *Jesus of Nazareth* (New York: Doubleday, 2007). This is a study grounded in scholarship and enters in dialogue with the great exegetes of our time. Yet, it is accessible to all discerning readers. In volume 2, *From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration* he presents a lengthy discussion of Jacob Neusner's book, *A Rabbi Talks with Jesus* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000). Professor Ratzinger states: "...this respectful and frank dispute between a believing Jew and Jesus, the son of Abraham, has opened my eyes to the greatness of Jesus' words and to the choice that the Gospel places before us" (p. 69). Thus we have an example of the progress in Catholic-Jewish relations since the Second Vatican Council. Pope Benedict met the Neusner family for a private audience in April 2008, when he paid a visit to the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington, D.C. A number of Jewish scholars have made significant contributions to the field of New Testament Studies. May this sharing of insights continue!

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CONGREGATION FOR THE CLERGY

Demands and Challenges for Priestly Formation

by Rev. Lawrence E. Frizzell

The Holy See's Congregation for the Clergy published a significant document on December 8, 2016. "[The Gift of the Priestly Vocation](#)" builds on a long tradition of guidelines for education for the priesthood.

Recalling my own studies at St. Paul's Seminary in Ottawa (Canada), with its emphasis on the unity of theological disciplines culminating with a course called "Synthesis," it is encouraging to note that "the professors should be regarded as a part of a single teaching community..." (#142). During the years of priestly formation, "the presence and contributions of experts in certain disciplines is helpful..." (#146). Ecumenical and interfaith dimensions of priestly education should draw upon experts as well as those listed: "...the fields of medicine, pedagogy, art, ecology, administration and in the use of social communications" (#145).

Besides modern languages to enhance the future priests' ability to minister to a range of parish settings, there is a call for knowledge of biblical Hebrew, Greek and Latin. "Special attention should also be given to a knowledge of the biblical culture and context, especially the history of the People of Israel, so as to improve the understanding of the Sacred Scriptures and to come to a proper relationship with the people of the Old Covenant" (#166 end).

All professors of theology and related disciplines are expected to integrate the teaching of the Second Vatican Council's documents into their courses. Besides the four Constitutions the students should be alerted to the nuanced insights to be drawn from the various decrees and the Declaration of the Church's Relations with Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*), with special attention to the official publications that interpret and apply the principles from the Council.

After the new lectionaries for Sundays and Weekdays were introduced, seminarians came to realize the pastoral importance of preaching and catechesis grounded in "salvation history." The new text adds that biblical studies should lead priests and the faithful into "a proper relationship with the people of the Old Covenant." This point challenges those who live in parts of the world where there are few Jews but where governments have a less than positive relation with the people and State of Israel. They should be guided to understand the implications of the demand not to "teach anything that does not conform to the truth of the Gospel and the spirit of Christ" (*Nostra Aetate* #4).

The call for other disciplines to be considered "an integral part of the course of theological studies, such as ecumenism and the history of religions, especially those that are commonly found in each country" (#175) deserves careful attention. To avoid an overload of courses, a program of philosophy and related disciplines might include introductory courses on these areas as well as answers to "the questions and challenges which emerge from the secular culture..." (#175).

This comprehensive document presents a beautiful vision of the ideals for priestly formation in the contemporary world. Theological studies should instill a thirst for life-long learning in the sacred sciences! As in other professions, the clergy should engage in continuing education throughout their years of service to the Gospel and the Church.

Over the decades, the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and its dialogue partners have emphasized the need for both seminarians and rabbinical students to receive instruction about the other faith and its practices. Resources are available to meet this challenge. In some places there are conferences for such students and junior clergy, including a biennial Emerging Leaders Conference on the international level. Such encounters should be multiplied in many places for the mutual benefit of future leaders and their congregations. May episcopal conferences in many countries take up this challenge!

JCST Alumna, Peppy Margolis



Peppy Margolis

Peppy Margolis (Class of 1999), who received a scholarship from the Institute of Judaic-Christian Studies for the Master of Arts in Jewish-Christian Studies (JCST) program at Seton Hall University, has been promoting justice and peace throughout New Jersey for more than 25 years. We recently spoke to her about her work at the Institute for Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

IJCS: It's always great to re-connect with you. Are you still at RVCC?

PEPPY: Yes, I'm still the Director of Community Programs for Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC), where I have designed the educational programs for the Institute for Holocaust and Genocide Studies for the past 13 years.

IJCS: Glad to hear you're still making a difference at RVCC! Can you tell us a little more about the Institute for Holocaust and Genocide Studies?

PEPPY: The Institute hosts 3,000 students and educators yearly who attend the annual *Learning through Experience Program*. The various speakers and workshops address the consequences of prejudice, hate, intolerance and violence that led to the Holocaust and other genocides of today. Topics include the roles that people play in society: rescuer, victim, bystander, collaborator and perpetrator. We ask the participants: "When confronted with a situation today, what would you do?"

IJCS: Before attending the Master of Arts in Jewish-Christian Studies (JCST) program, you were the primary author in 1990 of *Caring Makes A Difference K-8*, which was the first curriculum on prejudice reduction, cultural diversity, Holocaust and genocide. You were also a contributor to the 9/11 curriculum, *Learning From the Challenges of Our Times: Global Security, Terrorism and 9/11 in the Classroom*, which assists educators in talking and teaching about this tragic event. In 2012 you began to produce various programs and documentaries in the field of Holocaust and Genocide Studies. What have you produced so far?

Peppy: My studies in the JCST program prepared me for the various topics that emerged from my films: dialogue, reconciliation, forgiveness, co-existence, healing, "sins of the fathers" and who is "the Other?" Having been born in a Displaced Person's Camp near Frankfurt, Germany, I am interested in producing films that deal with issues about how the Holocaust has affected families and future generations. So far I have produced ***The Second Generation-Ripples From The Holocaust*** (2012) and ***Conversations with Survivors: Voices from the Holocaust*** (2014-2015).

The Second Generation-Ripples From The Holocaust examines the impact of the Holocaust on the children of Holocaust survivors, known as the "Second Generation." The film gives voice to 11 adult children of Holocaust Survivors, who are active members of the Holocaust and Genocide Institute at RVCC. The documentary includes excerpts from their interviews, together with their personal family photographs, and selected archival material. The film explores what it means to grow up with parents who lived through the 20th century Nazi terror and genocide. In the telling, they discover a sense of renewal and hope, embracing their legacy as the link between the past and the future.

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Peppy Margolis- *continued*

Conversations with Survivors: Voices from the Holocaust is a series of three half-hour films: ***Why Study The Holocaust: A Student's Perspective***, which addresses some of the difficult questions and concerns raised by students in a round-table conversation with Ursula Pawel, a survivor of Theresienstadt and Auschwitz; ***Why Teach about The Holocaust: An Educator's Perspective***, which highlights the primary value of oral history testimony and its usefulness in vividly reconstructing the fabric of daily life and documenting the details of family and community life; and ***Can Healing Occur: Building Bridges***, which explores a Jewish/German dialogue and the possibility of co-existence for these two peoples who are linked and separated by the horrors of the Holocaust.

IJCS: You not only produced ***The Second Generation-Ripples From The Holocaust*** but are also one of the 11 adult children of Holocaust Survivors interviewed in the documentary.

Peppy: My parents are survivors of the Holocaust and our family did suffer persecution by the Nazis. Therefore, as a Child of Survivors, I understand the importance of respecting and honoring the human rights of every person, so there will be a more peaceful world for future generations, which is my legacy.

IJCS: Your involvement in this and the other films you have produced are unique contributions to the field of Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do to positively impact our world today and tomorrow.

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Your loving-kindness is better than life! (Psalm 63:3)

Please consider supporting the mission of the Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies by making a donation.

Your gift will help us continue to unite and empower Jewish and Christian scholars, educators and students who are dedicated to exploring and promoting their shared values, practices, traditions and peaceful pursuits.

All donations are tax deductible and may be sent to:

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IJCS has been promoting peace for more than 60 years